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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004323

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PGOV KDEM IZ

SUBJECT: ALLAWI COALITION BUILDING EFFORTS NEARING COMPLETION

REF: BAGHDAD 04270

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert S. Ford for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Former PM Ayad Allawi is reportedly putting the final touches on a wide secular coalition for the December elections. Iraqi Communist Party Secretary General Hamid Mussa told us October 19

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that Allawi has completed his coalition negotiations and was completing negotiations on candidate lists (see paragraph 2), which include a wide range of key secular leaders who ran separately in the last election. Other potential coalition members gave differing reports and said that coalition negotiations are still ongoing. End Summary.

New Coalition Complete?

¶2. (C) Iraqi Communist Party Secretary General Hamid Mussa told Poloff on October 19 that Allawi had completed his coalition negotiations and was putting the final touches on candidate lists. Mussa, whose party ran on a separate slate in the January elections, will join forces with Allawi for the December vote in a group tentatively named the "The Patriotic Iraqi List." Mussa said the Allawi coalition currently includes, among others, the following key political groups and leaders:

-- Iraqi National Accord (Wifaq, Allawi's party)
-- Adnan al-Pachachi
-- Naseer Chaderchi
-- Arab Socialist Movement
-- Mufid al-Jaza'iri, former IIG minister
-- Ayad Jamal al-Din, independent cleric
-- Husayn al-Sadr, independent cleric
-- Wijdan Mikhael Salim

But Others Report No Final Deals Yet

¶3. (C) On October 19, Poloffs spoke with coalition supporters Wijdan Mikhael Salim (Chaldo-Assyrian TNA member) and Hussein Al-Adili (Islamic Democratic Trend Party), as well as conference participant Mohammed Ismael (assistant of Anadem Al-Jabiri, head of the Fadhila Party). All expressed their hopes for a government that is more representative of all Iraqis and less sectarian.

¶4. (C) Adili said the main goal was to form a coalition that can rival the 169 List to balance the National Assembly. Our sources, including Ghazi al-Yawr on October 19, said coalition negotiations are underway. None would confirm the finalization of any deals. Regarding the Sunnis at the conference, Al-Adili said there was no final agreement between the Iraqi Islamic Party and the Allawi team. Saad Janabi, whose cross-sectarian Iraqi Republican Gathering attended the October 17 conference, told us October 18 that the Islamic Party might put some candidates on Allawi's Patriotic List in selected governorates. The future of the Shia Islamist party Fadhila as an Allawi partner is also up in the air. Fadhila leader Nadim al-Jabiri attended and spoke at the October 17 conference. However, Jabiri's aide Ismael said no coalition deals had been finalized. He indicated that Fadhila also is negotiating with Sadr, SCIRI, and Dawa.

Other Views on Allawi Coalition Building Efforts

¶5. (C) Vice President Ghazi al-Yawr told Polcouns on October 19 that he was snubbed at the conference, did not deliver his speech and left the conference early. He didn't blame Ayad Allawi but rather his conference planner Mehdi Hafez for the order in which politicians

spoke at the event. (Yawr was keen to point out that given his social level, vice presidency, and control of 5 TNA seats, he should have spoken after Ayad Allawi. Instead Fadhila Party's Nadeem al-Jabiri, and ICP Hamid Mussa, spoke second and third respectively. Al-Yawar was scheduled to speak fourth but instead left the conference.) However, Al-Yawar said he still leaves the door open for an Allawi alliance.

16. (C) Faisal Qaragholi, Member of the Constitutional Monarchy political party (but not invited to the conference) told PolOff on October 18 that Allawi is trying very hard to win National Assembly seats by having Kurds, Sunni and Shia on one coalition. But the minds of most Shia will not be able to grasp voting for an Allawi list that has Sunni, Communists and Kurds. Faisal labeled the conference a rainbow coalition that gave the limelight to a host of political speakers and did not result in any guarantees of signing on to Allawi's coalition.

Comment

17. (C) So far, we are aware of no other broad, cross-sectarian political alliance as the December 2005 elections near. Ayad Allawi seems to have built a coalition that includes a wide range of key secular leaders who ran separately in the last election. Whether Allawi will be able to broaden the coalition to larger Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish parties remains to be seen. We are urging our contacts that favor liberal, centrist politics to think seriously of how to work as part of a larger electoral alliance like Allawi's.

Satterfield